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African American musician Mark Oakland Fax (1911-1974) was an educator and composer. His academic life as a student extended from Syracuse University (graduated 1933) to the Eastman School of Music (graduated 1945). He held faculty appointments at Paine College, Augusta Georgia (1934-1942), and Howard University, Washington DC (1947-1972) serving as Dean of the latter.

A review of Fax's oeuvre reveals that his compositions range in genres including solo vocal, choral, operatic, symphonic, chamber and solo instrumental works. Among these are nearly fifty extant choral works, which remain in manuscript. The purpose of this dissertation is to introduce the choral works of Mark Oakland Fax to a wider academic and choral audience. Chapter I provides general information about his choral catalogue and brief history explaining why so few of his compositions were published. Chapter II provides brief biographical information and places Fax in the lineage of contemporary African American composers. Chapter III is a conductor's analysis of his compositional techniques utilized in select compositions focusing on large formal structures, small formal devices, and text usage that best characterize his choral style. Chapter IV summarizes the compositional style that pervades his choral compositions and suggests areas of further research of his oeuvre.

THE SACRED CHORAL WORKS OF MARK OAKLAND FAX

by

Eric Orlando Poole

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Committee Chair

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This dissertation is dedicated to:

Stephanie Poole, my wife –

You have been the greatest friend and supporter that anyone could have. Your reassuring voice and gentle hand upon my shoulder were vital to helping achieve this educational

goal;

and

Helen McCain Poole, my late grandmother –

You saw the music in me!

APPROVAL PAGE

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

African American musician Mark Oakland Fax (1911-1974) was an educator and composer. His academic life as a student extended from Syracuse University (graduated 1933) to the Eastman School of Music (graduated 1945). He held faculty appointments at Paine College, Augusta Georgia (1934-1942), and Howard University, Washington DC (1947-1972) serving as Dean of the latter. He also studied piano at Bennington College in Vermont (1942) at which time he composed music for the Martha Graham Dance Troupe. In addition, he held numerous posts at churches, most notably Asbury United Methodist Church, Washington, DC where he was the music director, organist, and composer. Except for an intimate circle of organists and conductors, few musicians know his music.

A review of Fax's oeuvre reveals that his compositions range in genres including solo vocal, choral, operatic, symphonic, chamber and solo instrumental works. Nearly all of his choral compositions appear to be sacred in theme. In addition, his choral compositions fit into three categories: Anthems and Service Music; Arrangements of Pre-existing Music such as Negro Spirituals and Hymns; and two Extended Choral Works. Appendix A is a license Agreement granting the author permission to use images from the manuscripts in this document. Appendix B is a list of choral works by category

indicating the title of the work, the date of composition, the text source, the scoring, and publishing status.

There are approximately fifty extant sacred works in the Fax choral oeuvre. Only two of these works were published; *Go Tell it On the Mountain* (1939) by Presser, and *Whatsoever a Man Soweth* (1958) by Augsburg Fortress Publishing House. Both compositions are now out of print. In addition to these works, the only other composition that would have received wider distribution is *Where Shall My Wondering Soul Begin* with a text by Charles Wesley. Fax composed this “hymn” which is used by Paine College as the college hymn. The majority of Mark Fax’s choral compositions have remained in manuscript and, thus they have remained in relative obscurity.

The category of unpublished ‘classical’ choral music by African American composers represents a rich, unfamiliar treasure, and the search for works of genuine quality among these manuscripts can indeed be an exciting and rewarding venture.”¹ The purpose of this dissertation is to introduce the choral works of Mark Fax to a wider choral and academic audience. This goal will be accomplished by placing Mark Fax in historical context with his contemporaries and by analyzing six of his compositions selected from the Anthem and Service Music category. The titles to be analyzed are “Agnus Dei” from *Communion in f*, *De Profundis*, *Hallelujah*, *Hope Thou in God*, *Let Not Your Heart be Troubled* (1955 version), and *Make a Joyful Noise*.

¹ Evelyn White, *Choral Music by African American Composers: A Selected, Annotated Bibliography*, 2nd ed. (Latham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1996), 5.

The author chose these works as the basis for analysis for several reasons. First, the most prolific area of choral composition by Fax occurs within the category of Anthems and Service Music. Second, Fax based these works on original musical ideas rather than from pre-existing musical settings. Third, these works represent the range of Fax's compositional style considering the variety of large formal structures, small formal devices, and text usage, in both *a cappella* and accompanied settings.

Chapter I will provide general information about Fax's choral catalogue and a brief history explaining the decision to publish so few of his compositions. Chapter II provides brief biographical information and places Fax in the lineage of contemporary African American composers. Chapter III is a conductor's analysis of compositional techniques utilized by Fax in the selected compositions focusing on the areas listed above that best characterize his choral style. Chapter IV summarizes the compositional style that pervades the choral compositions of Mark Fax and suggests areas of further research of his oeuvre. Appendix A is a License Agreement authored by David Fax, son of Mark Fax, granting permission to utilize examples in this document. Appendix B is a listing of Fax's choral catalogue by category.

The Sacred Choral Catalogue

Of the total number of sacred choral works, twenty-three are anthems or service music – some identified by multiple titles; twenty-five are arrangements of hymns and Negro Spirituals; and two are extended works. Within these settings can be found a variety of vocal combinations ranging from three-part choir with soprano and alto soloists

as in *Give Ear O Shepherd* to a short cantata set for a bass soloist, a quartet, an unaccompanied septet, and SATB choir and organ accompaniment titled *The Forth Shepherd*. However, the majority of the compositions are set for four voices with sparing use of *divisi*. Few of his sacred choral compositions indicate use for a specific ceremony or dedication. Exceptions to this include the above referenced *Where Shall My Wondering Soul Begin*; the *Anthem for Father's Day: Rise Up, O Men of God*; *Whatsoever a Man Soweth*, commissioned by the District of Columbia Chapter of the American Guild of Organists; and *Hallelujah* composed for students of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia and Sigma Alpha Iota at Catholic University and the Howard University and the University of Maryland.²

Prolific Yet No Goal To Publish

That Mark Fax penned a substantial number of compositions yet left nearly all of them unpublished represented an important issue relative to this research and to plans for the dissemination of his choral works. Why then did he not actively seek publication for his music? Celia Davidson in *The International Dictionary of Black Composers* quotes Paul Hume's³ review of Fax's *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano* as 'striking...difficult...and

² *Hallelujah* is the only unpublished composition that contained a dedicatory statement.

³ Paul Hume (1915-2001) served as music critic for the *Washington Post* from 1947-1982. He also Hosted classical music programs on WGMS (Washington, DC); taught courses in music history at Georgetown and Yale Universities; and was a guest commentator during intermission broadcasts for the New York Metropolitan Opera. He also authored two books, *Catholic Church Music* and *Verdi: The Man and His Music*.

[Hume] declared the composer's oeuvre music of rare power.'⁴ It seems mysterious that with this kind of praise he would not be encouraged to seek out a publisher. Beyond the two published choral works mentioned above, a small number of works have been published after his death. However, these works lie outside the choral catalogue: two art songs in Willis Patterson's *Anthology of Art Songs by Black American Composers*; and organ works in *African American Organ Music Anthology* by Mickey Thomas Terry. Could it have been that his composing was only functional "gebrauchsmusik" as Velma Jones states in her master's thesis "The Music of Mark Oakland Fax"?⁵ He looked forward to the premier of *Till Victory is Won* and its March 1974 performance at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Even during his final hospital stay, he remained vigilant and continued to plan for the university and future compositions.⁶ These actions do not appear to be those of a composer who did not want recognition for his compositions. David Fax resolved this paradox in an email correspondence wherein he relayed that his father's principle aim was serving his students.

[He] believe[d] that would be out of character for my father. I don't recall dad ever expressing interest in devoting time to publishing. His focus was teaching and composing. He felt that taking time to complete paperwork, actively promote his

⁴ Celia Davidson, "Mark O. Fax" in *The International Dictionary of Black Composers*, ed. Samuel A. Floyd, Jr., (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1999), Vol. 1, pg. 452.

⁵ Velma Jones, "The Music of Mark Oakland Fax", M.A. Thesis, (Baltimore, MD: Morgan State University, 1978), 22.

⁶ Davidson, "Fax."

compositions, politic, etc., was not so much a waste of time as not the best use of his time. My father preferred allowing his creativity to speak for itself. One of my most cherished memories of my father is from his final months of life at Howard University Hospital. A sophomore at Howard, I would come down from the campus between classes and sit at his bedside. Having some of his students and faculty bring boxes from his office to the hospital, he would politely ask my forgiveness as he wrote feverishly to complete unfinished composition after composition. He knew I just wanted to spend time with him, and I knew how desperately he wanted to finish all he started. Writing was my father's focus, not trying to get works published.⁷

David Fax's response solved the conundrum as to the rationale for the compositions that were left unpublished. This document serves to bring the choral music of Mark Fax to a wider academic and choral audience.

⁷ David Fax, excerpt from email correspondence on 7 June 2012.

CHAPTER II

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Mark Fax was born on June 15, 1911, in Baltimore, Maryland, the younger of two sons. His father, Mark Sr., found work where available, but after World War I (1911-1918), he became a chiropodist in Baltimore. His mother Willie Estelle worked in the home.⁸ Celia Davidson in her article “Mark O. Fax” in *The International Dictionary of Black Composers* describes the Fax family as being religious and close. In the same article, his brother Elton characterized Mark as being determined and strong.⁹ His aunt, Carrie Mae Smith, instructed Mark on keyboard beginning at age nine. Upon the death of his father in 1924, Willie Estelle merged her household with her sisters Carrie Mae Smith and Francis Cargille. Fax’s development and notoriety as an organist grew quite quickly just a year after his father’s death when he was merely fourteen years old. Two factors influenced this elevation of skills and reputation. Fax successfully secured two significant posts; as organist for the large and historic Metropolitan Methodist Episcopal Church in Baltimore and as organist for the Regent Theatre, a silent movie house. These venues not only guaranteed large audiences but also provided Fax time to practice his

⁸ Davidson, “Fax.”

⁹ Ibid.

improvisational skills.¹⁰ Additionally, W. Llewellyn Wilson, Fax's high school music teacher and writer for the *Baltimore Afro-American*, promoted performances of talented students through the paper in his community.

From 1929 to 1933, Fax attended Syracuse University and majored in music. He excelled in college and won a Julius Rosenwald Fellowship in a national competition. He graduated with honors and received membership to the All-University Honors Society. Although he intended to continue his college education at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and having received a graduate scholarship to attend, the economic situation and insufficiency of the award forced him to return to Baltimore. Upon his return, he performed recitals and assisted with drama productions and music classes at Morgan State College, Baltimore.

Paine College in Augusta, GA hired Fax to establish the music department in the fall of 1934. He wrote the music curriculum and eventually chaired the department.¹¹ During his eight-year tenure from 1934 to 1942, Fax composed a number of vocal and piano compositions as well as operettas, all of which are lost. The only known extant work of his from the period is *Where Shall My Wondering Soul Begin*, the Paine College

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

hymn based on text by Charles Wesley. On a personal note, Fax met Dorothy Stuckey, a Paine College graduate from the class of 1937 and married her in 1938.¹²

Fax and his wife left Paine College in 1942 to continue his graduate education at the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester in Rochester, New York. The summer prior to the beginning of fall classes, Fax studied piano at Bennington College in Bennington, Vermont. While there, he composed dance music for the Martha Graham Dance Troupe. During his tenure at Eastman, Fax studied piano with Cecil Genhart (1899-1983) and composition with both Howard Hanson (1896-1981) and Bernard Rogers (1893-1968). Fax also secured employment as choir director and janitor at Mount Olivet Church, a position he obtained with the aid of his wife. Fax won a second Julius Rosenwald Fellowship in 1944 that allowed him to relinquish his position as choir director and continue his graduate studies. Because of his immense gratitude toward Mount Olivet, he remained on the church's janitorial staff working without monetary compensation. Fax graduated from the Eastman School of Music in 1945.

Fax began pursuit of a doctorate degree at New York University, but insufficient funding prevented him from completing the program. He then accepted a spring semester appointment at Black Mountain College in Black Mountain, North Carolina in 1946.¹³

¹² Dorothy Fax, interview March 24, 2005, Washington, DC.

¹³ Ibid.

Although Fax was drawn to the North Carolina community, Dorothy feared that the sparse African American community would adversely influence their children.¹⁴

Fax accepted a faculty position in 1947 in the School of Music at Howard University in Washington, DC. He maintained a relationship with Howard University for more than twenty-six years. He taught piano, counterpoint, and orchestration and developed excellent undergraduate and graduate curricula in counterpoint, orchestration and composition. Fax balanced his teaching with ambitions for leading the School of Music.¹⁵ He served as director of the School of Music, and later in his career, he was named the Acting Dean of the College of Fine Arts.

In addition to his employment at Howard University, Fax maintained posts at numerous churches in the District of Columbia. He had brief employment at First Baptist Church in Georgetown. His most significant church position, however, was at Asbury United Methodist Church in downtown Washington. Here is where Fax composed the majority of his sacred choral works. His music became highlights of the services. Following an accident in the summer of 1972, Fax experienced declining health. However, he continued to welcome students seeking guidance in all manner of composition and musical development. Mark Fax died on January 2, 1974.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Historical Context

African American composers have contributed much toward the development of the nation's musical identity. Their contributions have been generalized and associated with commercial styles such as Blues, Jazz, and Gospel; however, African American composers have also demonstrated significant ability with traditional forms associated with Classical music.¹⁶ Yet there exists a different image relative to the position and prominence of African American composers and their association with Classical music. Their history in Classical music is marked with inconsistency in promotion and acceptance. Like their Caucasian counterparts, and as the career of Mark Fax demonstrates, many other African American composers have received training in prestigious conservatories and universities and won prizes and competitions. In spite of these similarities in achievement, the struggle to gain a comparable spotlight as composers of Classical music continues. African American composers have produced works based not only on folk idioms, but also on original ideas in the traditional Western genres. The lineage of African American composers falls into two categories. Among the first generation of pioneering African American composers are Harry Thacker Burleigh (1866-1949), Will Marion Cook (1869-1944), R. Nathaniel Dett, (1882-1943), Florence Price (1888-1935), Francis Hall Johnson (1888-1970), and William Grant Still

¹⁶ Hildred Roach, *Black American Music: Past and Present*, (Malabar, FL.: Krieger Publishing Co. 1992). 110.

(1895-1980). These composers and many others availed themselves of the upsurge in artistic activity that occurred in the late nineteenth century, a time when symphony orchestras, major opera companies, and schools for training professional musicians were organized.¹⁷ Support from composers such as Antonin Dvorak (1841-1904) catapulted Burleigh and others to venues of great opportunity. The collective recognition received by Burleigh and his contemporaries paved the way for other African American composers to step to the forefront.

Subsequently, a second generation of African American composers transcended the previous models by expanding their compositional styles even further beyond folk song arrangements. Among this generation of composers were Howard Swanson (1909-1978), Undine Smith Moore (1904-1989), Ulysses Kay (1917-1995), and George Walker (b. 1922). They began the transition to prominence at a time, following World War II, when attitudes about blacks began to change and “the curtain of racial discrimination was beginning to lift ever so slightly.”¹⁸ This group of composers was less likely to view the folk song as a prevailing source for melodic and thematic material for their compositions. It is in this generation that Mark Fax belongs. His sacred choral music, like many of his contemporaries, remains largely unknown.

¹⁷ Eileen Southern, *The Music of Black Americans: A History*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co. 1997), 266.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Research mentioning the works and biographical information related to Fax includes *The International Dictionary of Black Composers* edited by Samuel A. Floyd, Jr.,¹⁹ *The Music of Black Americans: A History* by Eileen Southern,²⁰ and *Black American Music: Past and Present* by Hildred Roach.²¹ Other documentation on Fax's music is available in a master's thesis by Velma Jones titled *The Life and Works of Mark Oakland Fax 1911-1974*, and the dissertations *Black Idioms in Opera as Reflected in the Works of Six Afro-American Composers* (1976) by Hansonia Caldwell and *Operas by Afro-American Composers: A Critical Survey and Analysis of Selected Works* (1980) by Celia Davidson. The information published in these documents is general in nature and primarily biographical. The one exception is Caldwell's dissertation. In it, she discusses the story of Fax's opera *Till Victory is Won*, libretto by Owen Dodson, chair of the Theatre Arts Department at Howard University. One source compiled by Evelyn Davidson White, *Choral Music by African American Composers: A Selected, Annotated Bibliography*, appears to be the only source that specifically addresses the choral works of Mark Fax. Here however, the information is limited to titles, voicing, vocal ranges, instrumentation, and publishing status.

¹⁹ Samuel A. Floyd, Jr., *The International Dictionary of Black Composers*, Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, (United States, 1999), 449-455.

²⁰ Southern, *Music of Black Americans*, 546.

²¹ Roach, *Black American Music*, 110.

CHAPTER III

COMPOSITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Beyond the sources mentioned above, little is known of the sacred choral works of Mark Fax. This chapter seeks to demonstrate compositional aspects of his style typified throughout the sacred choral works utilized in the anthems and service music. The compositional features analyzed herein include Large Formal Structures, Small Formal Devices, and Text, with a subsection dedicated to it in this chapter. Fax's choral oeuvre consists of fifty extant sacred choral pieces. Furthermore, these compositions divide into three categories – Anthems and Service Music, Arrangements of Pre-existing Works such as Negro Spirituals and Hymns, and Extended Works. Appendix B is a listing by category of Fax's sacred choral works.

To best illustrate the scope of Fax's sacred choral compositions utilized as an anthem or in a church service and deriving from original musical ideas, the following works have been analyzed: "Agnus Dei" from *Communion in f, De Profundis, Hallelujah, Hope Thou in God, Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled* (1955 version), and *Make a Joyful Noise*. These compositions represent works written for church choirs, advanced ensembles, both a cappella, and accompanied.

Large Formal Structures

Fax employs a limited variety of large formal structures. These structures include **AB**, and the rounded forms **ABA'**, **ABCA'**, **AA¹A²BA³A⁴**, as well as a multi-sectional rounded form. His most pervasive compositional feature to delineate form is the use of definitive section breaks created by strong cadential movement. Most frequently, he incorporates half cadences and perfect authentic cadences to near or relative tonal centers. Cadential points receive added strength by lengthening final notes, and incorporating rests at the cadence, which produces a greater sense of repose.

Fax used an ABA¹ design formal design for *De Profundis* and *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled*. Tables 1 and 2 show the large formal structures for both of these pieces and illustrate Fax's manipulation of the tonal centers and cadences in the large form structure in a rounded form. The initials HC, IAC, and PAC in the tables identify the cadences as half cadence, imperfect authentic cadence, and perfect authentic cadence respectively. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate this large formal construction.

Table 1. *De Profundis* – structural analysis

	A		B		A'	
Section	1	7	18 19	29	37 38	49
Measure						
Tonal Center	b:	V	D b:	v-transition-V	b:	V-I in D
Cadence		HC	PAC			PAC

Table 2. *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled* – structural analysis

	A				B				A'				
Section													
Measures	1	14	15	17	18	19	22	29	34	35		49	
Tonal Center	b:	B b				A ^b - C				f# --- b			
Cadence		IAC I I --- V--DC/VI								V-i IAC			

Figure 1. *De Profundis* – mm. 31-35

Extended note lengths
create greater repose

S
31 *p* watch for the mor - ning
32 33
34 *p* Out of the depths have I cried O Lord let
35 *f*

A
31 *p* watch for the mor - ning
32 33
34 *p* Out of the depths have I cried O Lord let
35 *f*

T
31 - for the mor - ning
32 33
34 *p* Out of the depths have I cried O Lord let
35 *f*

B
31 - for the mor - ning
32 33
34 *p* Out of the depths have I cried O Lord let
35 *f*

Figure 2. *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled* – mm. 11-15

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled" from measures 11 to 15. The score is written for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B), and Organ (Org.). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "God - - - be-lieve al - so in me." for the Soprano and Bass parts, and "Let not your heart be trou-bled. be-lieve al-so in me." for the Alto and Tenor parts. A box highlights measures 14 and 15, with a text label "Extended note lengths create greater repose".

Fax creates a more involved rounded form in his work *Make a Joyful Noise*. As the works discussed above, his structure is clear and concise. He extends the form with an instrumental introduction, a section C, and a codetta. However, he creatively used the accompaniment as a link between subsections of the piece or as a dovetail to incorporate musical ideas in the accompaniment for the new section beneath the vocal repose of the cadence, illustrated in table 3. Figure 3 and figure 4 represent prime examples of these compositional features.

Table 3. *Make a Joyful Noise* – structural analysis

Section	A			B		C		A'		Codetta	
Measures	1	24	25	33	34	51	55	64	65	76	
Tonal Center	f:	on G	f:	D	d	C	f	c		C	
Cadence		PAC		HC		IAC	PAC	HC		IAC	

Figure 3. *Make a Joyful Noise* – mm.13-18

Accompaniment link between verses and sections

The musical score shows measures 13 through 18. The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and Piano accompaniment are shown. The lyrics are: 'pre-sence with - sing - ing' (measures 13-14), 'Know ye that the Lord He is God It is' (measures 15-18). A box highlights the piano accompaniment in measure 15, with an arrow pointing to it from a text box labeled 'Accompaniment link between verses and sections'.

Figure 4. *Make a Joyful Noise* – mm. 30-36

The image shows a musical score for the piece "Make a Joyful Noise" from measures 30 to 36. The score includes four vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a Piano accompaniment. The lyrics for the vocal parts are "gi-ving and in-to His courts - with praise". A box highlights measures 31 through 34, which contain the vocal melody and the piano accompaniment. An arrow points from a text box labeled "Choral cadence interrupted by new accompaniment phrase" to measure 35, where the vocal parts end with a cadence and the piano accompaniment begins a new phrase.

Fax composed *Hallelujah* for a joint performance by the Catholic University, Howard University and the University of Maryland chapters of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia and Sigma Alpha Iota. This more advanced ensemble inspired Fax to create a work that was equal to the abilities of the ensemble. This highly imitative piece is one of his more progressive and complex rounded structures. Table 4 clearly illustrates the $AA^1A^2BA^3A^4$ with codetta formal design.

Table 4. *Hallelujah* – structural analysis

	A					A ¹		A ²		B	
Section	1	12	24	36	50						
Measures											
Tonal Center	d:	f#:	c#	B	c						

	A ³		A ⁴		Codetta	
Section	50	67	81	82	87	
Measures						
Tonal Center	c:	d	d	d	d	

In each of the first three sections, Fax introduces a new music idea. Figures 5a, 5b, and 5c illustrate the motivic ideas that he uses as scaffolding for each section. He repeats each of the first three sections utilizing imitation as a primary compositional device and thus creates an additive composition.

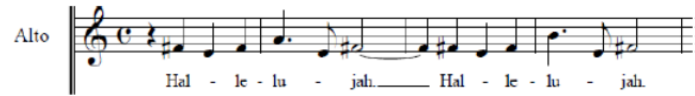
Figure 5a. *Hallelujah* – motive 1



Figure 5b. *Hallelujah* – motive 2



Figure 5c. *Hallelujah* – motive 3



Although Fax begins section **B** with motives 1 and 2, he halts the imitative progression of these ideas at measure 42. He then changes the texture from a polyphonic texture to a homorhythmic texture, intensifies motive 2 by incorporating triplet quarter note figures in mm. 46-49 in all voices, and then extends into tonal centers with flat signatures. Figure 6 demonstrates this intensification.

Figure 6. *Hallelujah* – section B, intensification of motive 2, mm. 44-49

One final compositional technique used by Fax that delineates each major section occurs in preparation of the final cadences for those sections. Preceding the cadence, the imitation ceases and all voices amplify the point of repose in the cadence. Moreover, typically, while three of the four voices sustain the cadential notes, one voice

simultaneously dovetails the beginning of the next section with motive 1. As seen in figure 7, measure 20 is the conclusion of the imitative lines preceding measures 21-24. The Tenor voice dovetails the beginning of section A^3 with motive 1. All of the major sections except A^4 conclude in this manner. At the end of A^4 all voices end with only the Tenor voice lingering on an extended note.

Figure 7. *Hallelujah* – choral cadence and Tenor dovetail, mm. 20-25

The musical score for 'Hallelujah' (measures 20-25) features four voices: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The lyrics are 'lu - jah Hal - le - lu - jah'. The score includes performance instructions: *f* As if soaring and *fp*. The Tenor voice has a dovetailing line that begins in measure 20 and continues through measure 25.

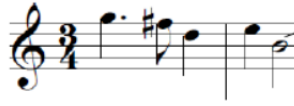
Fax utilizes an **AB** form, the simplest formal structure, in the “Agnus Dei” from *Communion in f* and *Hope Thou in God*. Each composition is sectionalized with well-defined cadences or notes of extended lengths and text repetition, thus making apparent their formal design. In the “Agnus Dei”, Fax states section **A** in measures 1-4 and immediately repeats this material in measures 4-8. Section **B** in measures 8-12 sounds in a new key and with new musical material. He then ends this concise movement with the yet unused text phrase “grant us peace” and then closes in the relative major.

Hope Thou in God starts with a ten-measure organ introduction and resolves to a half cadence at measure 39, thus ending section **A**. The organ transitions the piece from B minor to G minor, which begins section **B**. Again, Fax employs notes of greater contextual value to build intensity towards the cadence at measure 63 that concludes section **B**. He then employs a two-fold Amen as a codetta to conclude the piece.

Small Formal Devices

Fax utilizes small formal devices in each of the sacred choral works that exemplifies his creativity within the limited range of large formal structures he uses. Motives, vocal pairings, and overlapping phrases represent devices that appear in various approaches and combinations. The most conspicuous motivic development occurs in *Hallelujah* and is discussed and illustrated above in figures 5a, 5b, and 5c. In *Hope Thou in God*, Fax employs a sigh motive. This sigh motive begins the anthem and in later soundings, it accompanies important words “hart,” “foes,” and “down,” at measures 11, 31, and 47 respectively. Figure 8 illustrates one example. Fax reiterates the sigh motive in the accompaniment of the two-fold amen. However, at no point in the anthem does he place the sign motive in the vocal parts.

Figure 8. *Hope Thou in God* – sigh motive and unifying device



Make a Joyful Noise contains an accompaniment motive that unifies the composition. As seen in figure 9, this unifying motive links the ending of verse two with the beginning of verse three. The motive appears throughout the composition and in the codetta serves as the concluding idea for the anthem.

Figure 9. *Make a Joyful Noise* – unifying figure



Voice pairing represents another concept frequently used in the sacred choral works. One use of this technique is the special pairing of the high voices in unison (soprano/tenor) and contrasted to the low voices (alto/bass). Another use of this technique occurs with the divided male voices contrasting with the divided female voices, and offset by staggered entrances. Examples of this technique can be observed in figures 10a and 10b from *Make a Joyful Noise* and two examples from *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled* in figure 10b.

Fax's propensity for well-marked sections does not foretell predictability.

Alternatively, he uses overlapping phrases without obscuring the well-defined sections.

In addition to examples in *Hallelujah* in Figure 7, examples also exist in *Make a Joyful*

Noise above in figure 4, and *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled* as seen in figure 10b.

Figure 10a. *Make a Joyful Noise* – example of voice pairing technique

The image displays a musical score for the hymn "Make a Joyful Noise" in 4/4 time. The score includes parts for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B), and Organ (o.). The lyrics are: "pre-sence with - sing - ing Know ye that the Lord He is God It is". A box labeled "Sop/Ten and Alto/Bass Voice pairings" is positioned above the vocal staves. Arrows point from this box to the vocal staves, indicating the pairing of Soprano and Tenor, and Alto and Bass. The organ part is shown at the bottom, with measures 13 through 18 indicated. The score is written in G major and 4/4 time.

Figure 10b. *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled* – example of voice pairing technique

The image displays a musical score for the hymn "Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled" by John Rutter. The score is arranged for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and Organ. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats), and the time signature is 4/4. The score spans measures 21 to 25. Two specific techniques are highlighted with boxes and labels:

- Voice pairings with divisi:** A box labeled "Voice pairings with divisi" points to measures 21 and 22. In these measures, the Soprano and Alto parts are written in a single line, indicating they are to be performed by a pair of voices who divide the parts. The lyrics for these measures are "were not so, I would have told you."
- Overlapping phrases:** A box labeled "Overlapping phrases" points to measures 23 and 24. In these measures, the Soprano and Alto parts have overlapping lyrics: "I go to pre-pare a place - for you" and "and if I".

The Organ part provides harmonic support, with a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand. The lyrics for the Organ part are: "were not so, I would have told you."

Key relationships also represent a significant harmonic element in the sacred choral works wherein Fax employs a modulation or cadencial progression from the tonic to the mediant or tonic to the submediant. Table 5 provides a comparative listing of these key relationships.

Table 5. Key relationship within the sacred works

Title	Initial Tonal Center	Secondary Tonal Center(s)	Final Tonal Center
“Agnus Dei”	B ^b Minor	D ^b Major	D ^b Major
<i>De Profundis</i>	B Minor	D Major	B Minor
<i>Hallelujah</i>	D Minor	F# Minor/C# Minor B ^b Major/C Major	D Minor
<i>Hope Thou in God</i>	E Minor	G Minor	E Minor
<i>Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled</i>	B Minor	A ^b Major/C Major F# Minor	B Major
<i>Make a Joyful Noise</i>	F Minor	D Major	C Major

Text

Among the sacred choral works, Fax uses texts from a variety of sources and eras. Most often, he utilizes text from the Bible, but additional text sources include authors Countee Cullen and Charles Tindley.²² Fax employs a conservative manner in setting text to music. His preference is to set one line of text to one line of musical phrase with few repetitions of text, except at cadencial endings of large sections. In this way, the text is an influence in the overall musical structure. In Table 6, the **ABA**’ formal structure of *De Profundis* is most nearly a line-by-line rendering of Psalm 130 verse one through verse six. With a return to the musical material from section **A**, Fax then repeats and truncates line one thus rounding the poetic form as well as the musical form. This approach to text utilization is typical in the compositions in which there is a return of musical material.

²² Countee Cullen (1903-1946) was an African American poet of the Harlem Renaissance. Among his most noted poems are *Black Christ*, *Copper Sun*, and *The Ballad of the Brown Girl*. Charles Tindley (1851-1933) was an African American preacher credited as one of the progenitors of American Gospel music. Included among his most popular hymns are *The Storm is Passing Over*, and *We’ll Understand it Better By and By*. Another hymn *I’ll Overcome Some Day* became the impetus for the Civil Rights anthem *We Shall Overcome*.

Table 6. *De Profundis* – poetic and musical form

Poetic Form	Text	Musical Form
Vs. 1	1. Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD.	A
Vs. 2	2. Lord, hear my voice: 3. let thine ear[s] be attentive 4. to the voice of my [pleading]	
Vs. 3	5. If thou, LORD, shouldst mark iniquities, 6. O Lord, who shall stand?	
Vs. 4	7. But there is forgiveness with thee, 8. That thou mayest be feared.	
Vs. 5	9. I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, 10. And in his word do I hope.	B
Vs. 6	11. My soul waiteth for the Lord 12. more than they that watch for the morning: 13. I say, more than they that watch for the morning.	
Vs. 1	[1. Out of the depths have I cried*, O LORD.] 14. Let Israel hope in the LORD:	
Vs. 7	15. for with the LORD there is mercy, 16. And with him is plenteous redemption.	A'
Vs. 8	17. And he shall redeem Israel 18. from all his iniquities.	

Hope Thou in God represents a distinctive example of the manner in which Fax utilizes text in an AB form. Unlike *De Profundis*, Fax truncates the poetic structure of Psalm 42 and is selective in the verses that he does uses in this composition. Table 7 illustrates how Fax adapts the text to his preferred use, omitting several verses and adding an Amen.

Table 7. *Hope Thou in God* – poetic and musical form

Poetic Form	Text and Musical Phrase	Musical Form
Vs. 1	1. As the hart panteth for the water brooks so panteth my soul after Thee O God. [After Thee O God.]	A
Vs. 2	2. My soul thirsteth for the living God:	
Vs. 3	3. My tears flow by day and night	
Vs. 10	And my foes rebuke and say unto me. “Where is thy God? Where is thy God?”	
Vs. 11	5. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God. Hope thou in God. And I will praise the Lord, my countenance and my joy.	B
	6. Amen. Amen.	

In the “Agnus Dei,” Fax pivots from tradition, not in text underlay or phrasal repetition, but rather in the number and sequence of sections that he uses. The Mass Ordinary is comprised of five sections; however, Fax omits the Credo, and thus sets only four sections of the mass text. Moreover, instead of adhering to the traditional sequence among the sections, he reorders the sequence – Kyrie, Sanctus and Benedictus, Agnus Dei, and Gloria. Table 8 illustrates a comparison of the traditional sequence of the text to the sequence utilized by Fax.

Table 8. Comparison of text sequences

Traditional Sequence of the Mass Ordinary Text	Fax's Sequence of the Mass Ordinary
Kyrie	Kyrie
Gloria	Sanctus and Benedictus
Credo	Agnus Dei
Sanctus and Benedictus	Gloria
Agnus Dei	

Fax treats the texts in his sacred choral works in a sensitive manner wherein he writes to illustrate and move forward the meaning of the text. His apparent preference for homophonic textures reinforces the functional impetus for service music within the performing abilities of his choral groups. Even in the more complex *Hallelujah* with its syncopations, he aligns the stress of the third syllable “lu” with a stressed beat within the 4/4 meter as shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11. *Hallelujah* – syncopation and syllabic stress, mm. 30-31

The image displays a musical score for the hymn "Hallelujah" in measures 30 and 31. The score is written for four voices: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo and dynamics are marked as *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *cresc. poco a poco* (crescendo, little by little). The lyrics are "Hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le". The Soprano part begins with a syncopated rhythm, starting on the second beat of measure 30. The Alto part enters in measure 31 with a similar syncopated rhythm. The Tenor and Bass parts enter in measure 30 with a more straightforward rhythm. The score illustrates the alignment of the syllable "lu" with a stressed beat within the 4/4 meter.

Fax's tendency is to establish with each text phrase its own music phrase. He also freely modifies the text to parallel his compositional intent. However, he occasionally separates from tradition as observed in the sequence of text used in *Communion in f*. The examples cited above disclose textual tendencies in Fax's sacred choral works.

Fax's compositional practices reveal that he used a limited range of large formal structures and small formal devices. Furthermore, his selection of text originated primarily from biblical sources. Nevertheless, he permeated his compositions with variety among these tools and thus created imaginative sacred choral works. He further evidenced the use of large formal structures via well-defined sections as indicated by the augmentation of note values combined with repetition of text phrases and further marked by the use of rests as was seen above in figures 1 and 2. He also frequently employed half and imperfect cadential progressions to relative tonal centers. Analysis showed his use of this third relation in each of the works as cited above and summarized in table 5.

Fax demonstrates his use of small formal devices in accompaniments, textures, harmonic language, and vocal pairing. In structuring the accompaniments, he exhibits the ability for cohesion of motives as exemplified in *Hope Thou in God* and *Make a Joyful Noise*, as illustrated in figures 8 and 9. Construction of accompaniments further reveals an awareness of the need for accompaniments that support the singers over independent accompaniments. However, in his accompanied works, Fax also demonstrates the need for musicianship as evidenced in his use of direct modulations and movement to unusual tonal centers.

Hallelujah stands in contrast to the other works as it is the most advanced in its development. Fax uses imitation, syncopation, and motivic development throughout the work. He achieved additional contrast in section **B** by slowing down the rhythmic counterpoint using a homorhythmic texture with triplet figures, open fifth harmonies, expanded vocal ranges, and extended chords that changed the aural palette and built intensity towards the cadence.

Fax's technique of vocal pairing also represents a distinctive characteristic within his sacred choral works. He often grouped sections in unison by high voices contrasted to low voices as the discussion of *Make a Joyful Noise* explained. He achieved added variety in timbre by division within the sections as the discussion of *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled* illustrated. His use of text revealed a sensitive and conservative style wherein he almost exclusively used syllabic underlay. This creative use of large formal structures, small formal devices, and text treatment illustrates his compositional skill with in setting texts, performing forces, and groups of varying performance abilities.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Mark Oakland Fax was born at a time when African American composers struggled for broad and sustained recognition for their compositions. He also belonged to a second generation of African American composers who were poised to forge new paths in compositional output. His music education had begun by age nine and by age fourteen, he had secured employment as organist at two prominent Baltimore venues, the Metropolitan Methodist Episcopal Church and the Regent Theatre. This and other musical achievements earned local fame for Fax.

He received honors and awards during his college education. In the first year at Syracuse University, Fax won the coveted Julius Rosenwald Fellowship; graduated with honors in 1933, and received membership to the All-University Honor Society. He earned a master's degree from the Eastman School of Music where he won an uncommon second Rosenwald Fellowship. This second award made it possible to finish his studies; he graduated in 1945. He held faculty appointments at Paine College (1934-1942), Black Mountain College (1946), and Howard University (1947-1972). He also served as organist and choir director at the prominent African American church Asbury United Methodist Church. The vast majority of the extant sacred choral works were composed during his lengthy tenure at Howard University and Asbury United Methodist Church.

Fax's choral works are best classified in three categories, yet only selections from the Anthems and Service Music category were analyzed because they represented the genre central to the purpose of this study - to introduce the sacred choral works to a wider academic and choral audience. Analysis of the six selections: "Agnus Dei" from *Communion in f*; *De Profundis*; *Hallelujah*; *Hope Thou in God*; *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled*; and *Make a Joyful Noise*, disclosed characteristic tendencies in his writing. Exceptions were also explained. He demonstrated a preference for a limited number of large formal structures, which included primarily rounded forms. Within the large formal structures, he utilized small formal devices in such a manner that created works of interest and musical worth. Some specific formal devices included motives, voice pairing, overlapping phrases, syncopation, imitation, and modulations to mediant or relative tonal centers. However, Fax utilized these small formal devices in a variety of means avoiding predictability. His writing style further indicated an understanding of the performance abilities of available choral ensembles.

The primary source for his choral texts was the Bible though occasionally he selected texts from other writers, Countee Cullen and Charles Tindley among them. He most frequently used texts from the book of Psalm. In setting text to music, he displayed a sensitive and careful manipulation of poetic form and structure. Moreover, he almost exclusively used a syllabic text underlay.

Mark Oakland Fax was a sensitive and conservative composer with regard to his music for the church. As such, he did not incorporate in his anthems and service music

the *avant-garde* techniques of the middle twentieth century. He also avoided the popular church trends that were increasingly prevalent after World War II. Fax remained mindful of the opportunities to strengthen the musical abilities of his groups and particularly his students. His students so appreciated his influence that they continued to return for visits, even during his last hospital stay.

Finally, Mark Oakland Fax's ability to compose choral music of high quality and variety is evident. Works analyzed within this study revealed an approach to composition that illustrated his skill in understanding simple and complex compositional processes. This study provides the first in depth review of his sacred choral works. However, the ultimate goal is to produce performance editions of the sacred choral works and make them available to academic and choral conductors for further study and consideration for performance.

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APPENDIX A
LICENSE AGREEMENT

LICENSE AGREEMENT

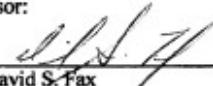
This License Agreement ("Agreement") is made effective as of the date that Mr. David S. Fax, of 7421 Quail Ridge Ln, Bowie, Maryland, 20720, davidfax@yahoo.com receives the signed copy from Mr. Eric Poole, ubetrsing@hotmail.com.

In the Agreement, the party who is granting the right to use the licensed property will be referred to as "Mr. Fax" and the party who is receiving the right to use the licensed property will be referred to as "Mr. Poole."

The parties agree as follows:

1. **GRANT OF LICENSE.** Mr. Fax owns copyrighted scores, manuscripts and associated documents (referred herein as "Property") related to compositions by his father, Mark Fax. In accordance with this Agreement, Mr. Fax grants Mr. Poole a non-exclusive license to use the Property for the sole purpose of completing academic requirements for his doctoral degree. Mr. Fax retains title and full ownership of the Property.
2. **PAYMENT OF ROYALTY.** No royalty applies when the Property is used as indicated in paragraph 1 above.
3. **MODIFICATIONS.** Mr. Poole may not modify or change the Property in any manner.
4. **DEFAULTS.** If Mr. Poole fails to abide by the obligations of this Agreement, Mr. Fax shall have the option to cancel this Agreement by providing 30 days written notice to Mr. Poole.
5. **TRANSFER OF RIGHTS.** This Agreement shall be binding on any successors of the parties. Neither party shall have the right to assign its interests in this Agreement to any other party, unless the prior written consent of the other party is obtained, or By Law.
6. **TERMINATION.** This Agreement may be terminated by either party by providing 30 days written notice to the other party. This Agreement shall terminate automatically at midnight on July 6, 2013.
7. **ENTIRE AGREEMENT.** This Agreement contains the entire agreement of the parties and there are no other promises or conditions in any other agreement whether oral or written. This Agreement supersedes any prior written or oral agreements between the parties.
8. **AMENDMENT.** This Agreement may be modified or amended, if the amendment is made in writing and is signed by both parties.
9. **SEVERABILITY.** If any provision of this Agreement shall be held to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the remaining provisions shall continue to be valid and enforceable. If a court finds that any provision of this Agreement is invalid or unenforceable, but that by limiting such provision it would become valid or enforceable, then such provision shall be deemed to be written, construed, and enforced as so limited.
10. **WAIVER OF CONTRACTUAL RIGHT.** The failure of either party to enforce any provision of this Agreement shall not be construed as a waiver or limitation of that party's right to subsequently enforce and compel strict compliance with every provision of this Agreement.
11. **APPLICABLE LAW.** This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Maryland.
12. **SIGNATURE.** Because the parties are separated, and email is the most expeditious method for completing this Agreement, Mr. Poole agrees to sign and date this document, and return a scanned copy to Mr. Fax within seven (7) business days from the execution of this Agreement.

Licensor:


Mr. David S. Fax


Date

Licensee:


Mr. Eric Poole


Date

APPENDIX B

CHORAL WORKS LIST BY CATEGORY

ANTHEMS AND SERVICE MUSIC				
Title	Date	Text Source	Scoring	Publisher
<i>A song of Praise</i>	1948	Countee Cullen	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>As the Hart Panteth</i> also titled <i>Hope Thou in God</i>	1961	Psalm 42	SATB, Organ	Manuscript
<i>By the Waters of Babylon</i>	1940	Psalm 137	SATB, Piano	Manuscript
<i>De Profundis</i> also titled <i>Out of the Depths</i>	1954	Psalm 130	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Except the Lord Build the House</i>	1957	Psalm 127 and 132	SATB, Organ	Manuscript
<i>Give Ear O Shepherd</i>	1950	Psalm 80		Manuscript
<i>Hallelujah</i>	1971		SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Hope Thou In God</i> also titled <i>As the Hart Panteth</i>	1961	Psalm 42	SATB, Organ	Manuscript
<i>In My Father's House are Many Mansions</i>	1968	John 14:1-3	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Let All the People Praise Thee</i> also titled <i>Psalm 67</i>	ND	Psalm 67	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled</i>	1947	John 14:1-3	SATB, Organ	Manuscript
<i>Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled</i>	1955	John 14:1-3	SATB, Organ	Manuscript
<i>Make a Joyful Noise</i>	1965	Psalm 100	SATB, Piano	Manuscript
<i>Communion in D</i>	1932	Mass Ordinary/John 1:29	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Communion in D</i>	Rev: 1962	Mass Ordinary/ John 1:29	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Communion in F</i>	1954	Mass Ordinary/John 1:29	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Out of the Depths</i> also titled <i>De Profundis</i>	1954	Psalm 130	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Praise Ye the Lord</i>	1949	Psalm 150	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Psalm 121</i>		Psalm 121	SAB	Manuscript
<i>Psalm 67</i> also titled <i>Let All the People Praise Thee</i>	ND	Psalm 67	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>The Lord is My Light</i>	1950	Psalm 27	SAB, Organ/Piano	Manuscript
<i>The Lord is My Light</i>	1950	Psalm 27	SATB	Manuscript
<i>The Lord is My Light</i>	ND	Psalm 27	Unison	Manuscript
<i>What So Ever a Man Soweth</i>	1958	Galatians 6:7-9	SATB, Organ	Augsburg Pub.
<i>Who Can Find a Virtuous Woman</i>	1953	Proverbs 31:10	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Who Shall Separate Us?</i>	1957	Romans 8:35-39	SATB, Organ	Manuscript

		NEGRO SPIRITUALS		
Title	Date	Text Source	Scoring	Publisher
<i>Go Down Moses</i>	ND	Exodus 7:16 and 11:5	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Go Tell It On the Mountain</i>	ND	Luke 1:18-25 Matthew 2:1-9	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Home In-a That Rock</i>	ND	Luke 16: 19-25	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Jacob's Ladder</i>	1965	Genesis 28: 10-19	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Kumbaya</i>	ND	2 Chronicles 6:21	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Po' Mo'ner Got a Home At Las'</i>	ND	Unknown	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Ride On King Jesus</i>	ND	Luke 19:28-40	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Rise Up Shepherd and Follow</i>	ND	Matthew 2:1-12	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Round the Glory Manger</i>	ND	Luke 2:7	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>Were You There</i>	1968	John 19	TTBB, a cappella	Manuscript

HYMN-TUNE
ARRANGEMENTS

Title	Date	Text Source	Scoring	Publisher
<i>Be Known to Us in Breaking Bread</i>	1962	James Montgomery	SATB, a cappella	Manuscript
<i>God Leads His Dear Children Along</i>	1970	George A. Young	SATB, Organ/Piano	Manuscript
<i>Lift Every Voice and Sing</i>	1971	James W. Johnson	SATB, Organ/Piano	Manuscript
<i>The Lord Is In His Holy Temple</i>	ND	Habakkuk 2:20	SATB, Organ/Piano	Manuscript
<i>O Holy Night</i>	ND	Placide Cappeau de Roquemaure	SATB, Organ	Manuscript
<i>Rise Up, O Men of God</i>	1969	William P. Merrill	TTBB, Organ	Manuscript
<i>Where Shall My Wondering Soul Begin</i>	1934	Charles Wesley	SATB, Organ/Piano	Paine College

EXTENDED
WORKS

<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Text Source</u>	<u>Scoring</u>	<u>Publisher</u>
<i>The Fourth Shepherd</i>	ND	Alfred Joyce Kilmer	SATB, Bass soloist, Quartet, Septet, Organ	Manuscript
<i>Rhapsody on Psalm 137</i>	1954- 1957	Psalm 137	SATB, Orchestra	Manuscript